V E T A C

Virginia Educational Technology Advisory Committee

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Virginia Educational Technology Advisory Committee
2007-08 Annual Report
Submitted by John W. Littlefield, VETAC Chair

The Virginia Educational Technology Advisory Committee (VETAC) continued to fulfill its mission during the 2007-08 school year, advising the Virginia Board of Education through the Superintendent of Public Instruction on educational technology matters. VETAC's role includes, but is not limited to, providing information and recommendations to local school divisions and the Virginia Department of Education on technology policy and funding-related issues.

VETAC's membership consists of a broad constituency of technology stakeholders from the public and private sectors. VETAC members include teachers, principals, superintendents, curriculum specialists, educational technology program directors and coordinators, higher education administrators, educational professional organizations, school board members, and members of the business community. Each member serves as an advocate for educational technology and acts as a conduit for communicating educational-technology-related issues between VETAC and the member's host organization or affiliate.

During the 2007–08 school year, the VETAC full committee participated in advisory work sessions and presentations on the following subjects: *Educational Technology Guidelines*, EIMS updates, School 2.0, Virtual Virginia, Share the Skies, instructional technology resource teachers, and other informational items. The work sessions and updates provided valuable information for the members to share back with their organizations. Virginia Department of Education representatives shared information and feedback.

The VETAC meeting format was changed during the 2007-08 year to include videoconferencing, which allows members to participate without traveling. The executive committee is discussing this format to determine its impact on the meetings.

Committees

A subcommittee was formed to work with the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) on the National Educational Technology Standards for Administrators (NETS*A). Adele Morris will chair and coordinate this work during the upcoming year.

Work Session

Dr. Tammy McGraw, Director of Educational Technology, led the *Educational Technology Guidelines* work session. VETAC discussed the draft document and which components of the original document should be kept, revised, or deleted. The completed document was released in May 2008 and is now available at http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Technology/OET/edtech_guidelines.pdf.

Presentations and Updates

Bethann Canada, director of the Office of Educational Information Management, gave the Educational Information Management System (EIMS) update. The EIMS system collects data from school divisions using the Student Interpretative Framework (SIF) to receive and send data instantaneously. The system facilitates the Student Testing Identifier (STI) to each division within minutes of registering a student. It also generates State Standardized Testing Data, which enable divisions to produce student reports based on subgroups or individuals. Longitudinal Systems Expansion Project grant funding has supported the development and expansion of this system.

Tim Magner and Hugh Walkup of the United States Department of Education provided the School 2.0 update. School 2.0 creates a technology-supported communications network among school, home, and the community. Technology can help schools adapt to new communications challenges, but it should not drive or limit the types of communication among network members. School 2.0 tools suggest how to start a community-based dialogue about the types of communications networks should support. The eToolkit provides a simple set of drill-down hot spots for discussion and articulation that shows the interdependence among hot spots like home, school, and community. A virtual map allows users to explore data issues at each hot spot and level. A self-assessment tool for principals and chief technology officers encourages self-reflection and discussion about School 2.0 needs; this tool gives leaders a chance to self-direct professional development in meeting network communications needs. A third set of tools, called the "Meeting in a Box," empowers community champions to plan meetings that educate community members about School 2.0. Another component has challenge scenarios that point out obstacles facing School 2.0 and examples of how communities have overcome obstacles to improve communications. Finally, a bandwidth planner helps leaders and community members understand communication possibilities based on available resources.

Cathy Cheely, Director of Teleproduction Services, gave the Virtual Virginia update. Virtual Virginia (http://www.virtualvirginia.org/) is a collection of online advanced placement courses offered to Virginia high school students. The system utilizes Desire2Learn course management software to maximize the interactivity of each class. Each course contains video, audio, telephone conversations, whiteboard, and online discussions to facilitate a rich learning environment. Enrollment has more than doubled in the last year.

Dr. Tammy McGraw, Director of Educational Technology, provided the Share the Skies update. Share the Skies (http://sharetheskies.org/home.cfm) is the nation's first statewide initiative that enables students to study astronomy in real time during the daytime without leaving the classroom. This innovative project was developed by the Virginia Department of Education, New Mexico Skies, Software Bisque, and Virginia Tech's Institute for Connecting Science Research to the Classroom. It enables Virginia students to access and control a research-grade telescope to explore Australia's night skies via the Internet. Students use CCD (charge-coupled device) imaging techniques to capture digital images of deep space for further study.

Julie Mersiowsky, an educational technology specialist for the Virginia Department of Education, gave the instructional technology resource teacher (ITRT) update. The ITRT position was funded in the 2005 Standards of Quality to support instructional technology integration in the classroom. This session reviewed the ITRT survey and addressed the different organizational structures and utilizations of the ITRT positions. An information brief offers additional details:
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Technology/OET/info_brief_itrt.pdf

Lan Neugent, Assistant Superintendent of Technology and Career Education, provided the legislative update, reviewing relevant information pertaining to K-12 technology education.